

PublicSector MANAGER

Amanda Nkoe

Rising through
youth empowerment
programmes

Youth Month

Minister Sindisiwe
Chikunga on
RESET@50:
The Future Calls

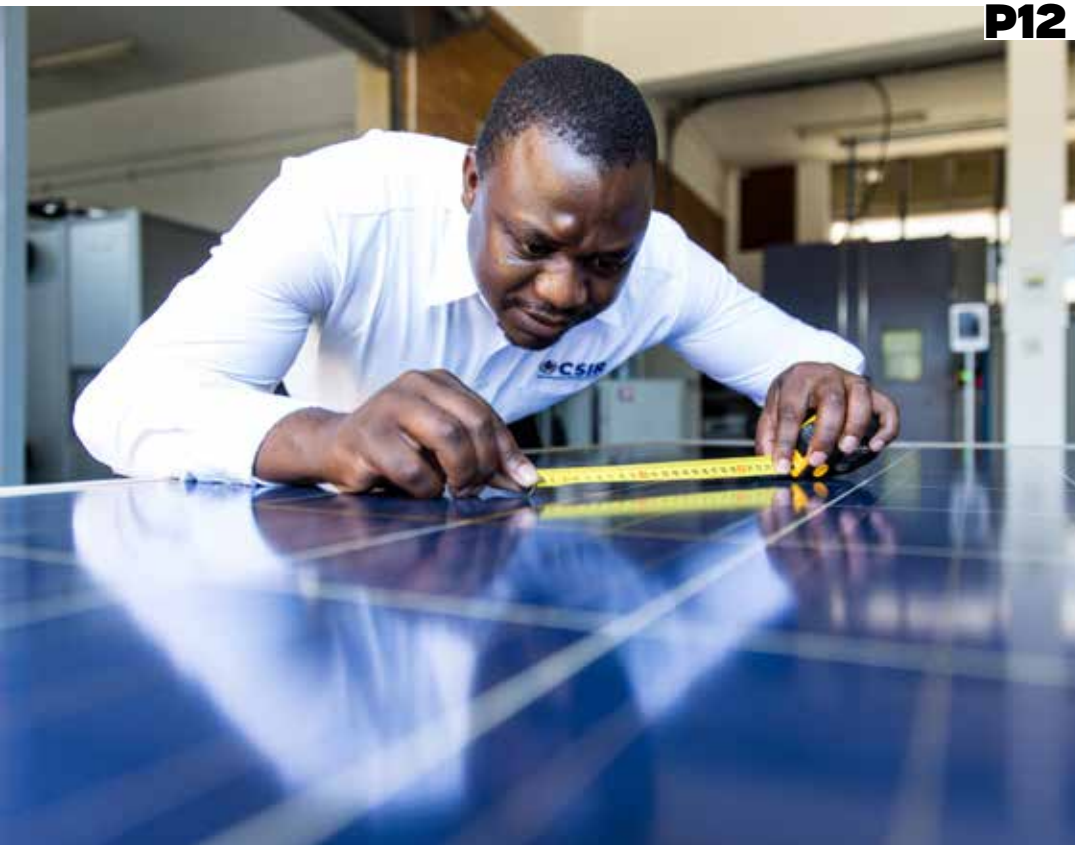
Andisa Zinja

Proof that opportunity
unlocks youth
potential



Contents:

June 2026



P12



P20

REGULARS

Minister's Message

A national year of memory, reflection and action **P4**

ADG's Message

Managing migration and public concerns within the framework of the Constitution **P8**

Conversations with leaders

CSIR innovations are driving South Africa's transition to renewable energy, says Dr Thabo Hlalele **P12**

Women in the public sector

The Council for Medical Schemes Chairperson, Dr Thandi Mabeba, discusses the future of healthcare financing in South Africa **P16**

Trailblazer

Amanda Nkoe, Engineer at Transnet Rail Infrastructure Manager, charts her path to leadership **P20**

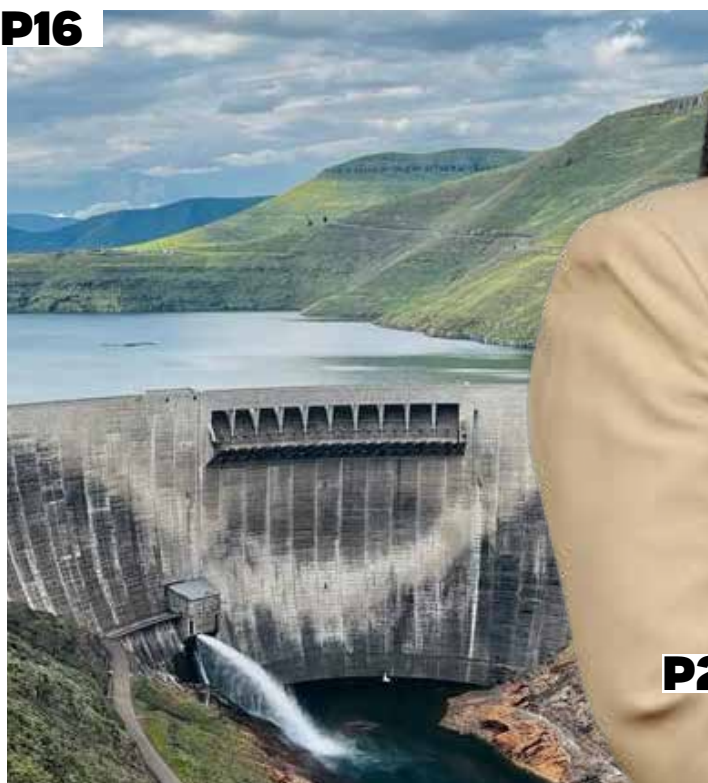
Profiles in leadership

Prodigies deserve leadership opportunities, urges TCTA CFO Andisa Zinja **P24**

Office of the President

Bafana Bafana inspires us to hope and to strive **P26**

P16



P24





P26

FEATURES

National Orders ceremony celebrates achievers across sectors

The 2026 celebration carries deeper significance against national historical milestones **P30**

eThekweni intensifies fight against fraud and corruption

Municipality adopts zero-tolerance stance to enforce accountability and criminal prosecution **P32**

Highly concentrated markets delay economic participation

Competition Commission report calls for the removal of gatekeepers and paper barriers to business **P34**

Advancing youth development through opportunity

Free State Engineering Technologist Thabiso Matsemela brings innovation to the public sector **P36**

LIFESTYLE

Grooming and style

Telling African stories through ready-to-wear fashion **P38**

Food and wine

Chef de Partie Prudence Ntombela's award-winning recipe **P42**

Travel

A Big Five escape on Pretoria's doorstep **P44**



P30

P44



**government
communications**

Department:
Government Communication and Information System
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

THE MAGAZINE FOR PUBLIC SECTOR DECISION-MAKERS | **Publishers:** Government Communication and Information System (GCIS)
Enquiries: +27 012 473 0010 Switchboard: +27 012 473 0000 Tshedimosetso House: 1035 Francis Baard Street (corner Festival Street),
Hatfield, Pretoria Private Bag X745, Pretoria, South Africa, 0001 www.gcis.gov.za
Acting Director-General Nomonde Mnkwa **Acting Deputy Director-General: Corporate Services** Terry Vandayar
Deputy Director-General: Intergovernmental Coordination & Stakeholder Management Michael Currin
Acting Deputy Director-General: Content Processing & Dissemination Sandile Nene
Head of Editorial and Production Zanele Mngadi Zanelemngadi@gcis.gov.za
Managing Editor Tshupo Nkosi tshupon@gcis.gov.za
News Editor Miriam Mokoena miriam@gcis.gov.za
GCIS Photographic Unit Elmond Jiyane | Ntswe Mokoena | Siyabulela Duda | Kopano Tlape | Busisiwe Malungwane
Production Assistant Jauhara Khan **Graphic Designer** Tendai Goneshe

A national year of memory, reflection and action


We cannot launch the Golden Jubilee Commemoration of the 1976 Youth Uprising without first reflecting on the significance of the moment that brings us here.

The morning of 16 June 1976 did not begin on 16 June. It had been building for decades. In 1953, the apartheid government introduced the Bantu Education Act, laying the foundation for an education system designed to separate, control and limit Black children.

By the late 1960s and early 1970s, a spirit was rising among Black students and young people. The Black Consciousness Movement was teaching a generation to reject inferiority, to recover dignity, and to understand that apartheid did

not only control land, labour and laws – it also tried to control the mind.

In 1969, the South African Students' Organisation was launched at Turfloop, the then University of the North.



Minister in The Presidency for
Women, Youth and Persons with
Disabilities Sindisiwe Chikunga .

Turfloop became one of the important centres of Black student politics, connecting the struggles of township schools, rural campuses and national resistance.

In 1974, the apartheid state issued instructions that Afrikaans and English must be used on a 50/50 basis as languages of instruction in Black secondary schools. Subjects such as mathematics, arithmetic and social studies were to be taught in Afrikaans.

This was not a neutral language policy. It was the apartheid state saying to Black children: even your learning will happen on our terms.

The gathering storm

By May 1976, the matter had moved from memoranda and warnings into student action. On 17 May 1976, students at Orlando West Junior Secondary School would go on strike. Two days later, a committee of students would present a memorandum to their principal. Students from other schools would join the strike. By 24 May, students from Pimville Higher Primary and Khulangelwazi Higher Primary would also join.

By 13 June 1976, student leaders had formed an action

committee, later known as the Soweto Students' Representative Council. Their plan was not to start a violent uprising. Their plan was to hold a peaceful protest against the compulsory use of Afrikaans as a language of instruction.

On the morning of 16 June 1976, learners moved in organised columns, collecting other students along the way, with the intention of proceeding to Orlando Stadium for a peaceful rally. But apartheid responded to children with violence.

June 1976 was not only a tragic period in our history. It was a moment of political clarity. It showed South Africa and the world that young people are not spectators in history. They are makers of history and leaders of the future.

In May 2026, we launched a year of national action under the theme; RESET@50 – The Future Calls.

This is not just a campaign. It is a call-to-action to:

- ◎ **Remember truthfully:** not through selective memory, but the full truth of pain, courage, betrayal, resilience and sacrifice.
- ◎ **Engage the present:** by recognising the impact of the 1976 Youth Upris-

ing on the trajectory of our country, and what it demands of us today.

- ◎ **Shift the narrative:** from seeing young people as a problem, to recognising young people as solutions and co-creators of today and the future.
- ◎ **Empower this generation:** by transferring leadership, not only stories, and building intergenerational continuity.
- ◎ **Transform the future:** by ensuring that our programmes advance economic inclusion for all young people, especially young women and young persons with disabilities.

Promises of democracy

In 1994, young people entered a democracy that promised political freedom, equal citizenship and a new social contract.

In 1996, that promise was given constitutional force. Our Constitution, which this year turns 30, affirmed the rights to dignity, equality and freedom.

Since then, government has expanded access to education, student funding, youth development institutions, public participation platforms, skills

development and employment pathways.

Through generations of student activism and progressive deliberate policy choices of the democratic state, enrolment in the public university sector grew from 495 356 students in 1994 to more than more than 1 million in 2022. By 2025, public universities were projected to enrol over 1.15 million students, while TVET colleges were projected to enrol over 587 000 students.

The struggles of student movements over many years, culminating in the Fees Must Fall protests of 2015, 2016 and 2017, pushed the country to confront the unfinished question of free decolonised higher education. Through the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS), millions of young people from poor and working-class households have accessed university and TVET opportunities. Between 2019 and 2023, the Department of Higher Education and Training reported that the NSFAS disbursed R192 billion, benefiting almost 3.9 million students in universities and TVET colleges.

Youth empowerment

We have also built a legislative and institutional framework for



youth development. Through the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) Act of 2008, and its subsequent 2024 amendment, government has institutionalised youth development and created a dedicated agency to coordinate and support young people across the country.

And in this financial year, government is placing R1.8 billion behind the NYDA to expand youth development, entrepreneurship, employment pathways, skills development and paid service opportunities. This includes support for

youth-owned enterprises, business development support, job placement, and work towards a National Youth Fund Strategy.

The Presidential Youth Employment Intervention has created a national platform for connecting young people to opportunities. By 2025, the National Pathway Management Network had over 4.78 million young people registered, with more than 1.67 million earning opportunities secured to date.

The Presidential Youth Employment Initiative created opportunities for more than 320 000 young people in ap-

proximately 23 000 public schools in its first phase alone.

These gains show that democracy has created institutions, opened doors, and placed resources behind youth development.

But the next phase cannot be measured only by access. It must be measured by completion, transition, absorption, ownership and dignity.

So why is the RESET necessary and what must change?

Statistics South Africa's Quarterly Labour Force Survey, youth unemployment increased to 32.7%. The survey also revealed that more than four in 10 young people aged 15 to 34 were not in employment, education or training, with the NEET rate for this age group reaching 45.6% in the first quarter of 2026.

These figures require us to focus on the pressure points in the youth development pipeline.

It is not enough for young people to enter education if they do not complete, and if completion does not lead to work, enterprise or further training.

It is not enough to train young people if those skills are not linked to growing sectors, real employers and productive opportunities.

It is not enough to support

young people with ideas, businesses and digital access if they remain outside finance, procurement, markets, value chains and the digital economy.

That is why this reset is also a call to higher education institutions, SETAs, industry and the private sector to work together more deliberately.

Universities and TVET colleges must work with industry in the co-creation of curricula, workplace exposure and skills planning, so that young people are not trained for an economy that cannot absorb them.

That is the practical meaning of RESET@50: a youth development pipeline that moves young people from access to completion, from qualifications to pathways, and from training to absorption, ownership and dignity.❖

***This message is part of a speech delivered by the Minister at the Media Launch of the Golden Jubilee Commemoration of the 1976 Youth Uprising. Scan the QR code to access the full speech.**





Managing Migration Together

Our plan to tackle illegal migration



Crack down on violations of immigration and labour laws



Secure our borders



Strengthen our immigration system



Close the gaps in our laws and policies



Work with other countries in Africa



Managing migration and public concerns within the framework of the Constitution

The right to march, to protest and to be heard is one of the most hard-won gains of our democracy. It was forged through sacrifice, often in the face of brutal repression. Today, it is protected by the

Constitution – a living testament to those who stood up, spoke out and paid the price for the freedom we enjoy today.

This month, the nation marks the 50th anniversary of the 1976 Youth Uprising. It remains one of the most painful yet defining moments in our history. On 16 June 1976, young people took to the streets to reject injustice and demand dignity in education, and many lost their lives in the process.

Under the theme, RESET@50 – The Future Calls, this commemoration is not only about remembrance, it is about action. We must ensure that today's young people are empowered to shape South Africa's democratic, economic, social and cultural future.

We also mark 70 years since the 1956 Women's

March, when thousands of women united against injustice. These historic moments coincide with the 30th anniversary of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996*, which restored dignity, equality and fundamental rights to all.

Our Constitution does more than guarantee rights. It is a guide for how we navigate complexity, resolve tensions and uphold the values that define us as a nation.

One such area of complexity today is migration.

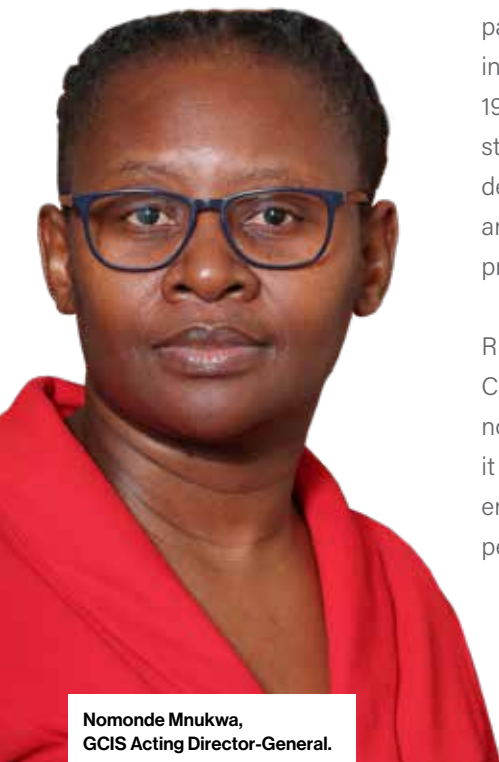
In recent weeks, the country has witnessed marches and public demonstrations against illegal immigrants. These developments reflect real frustration within communities. Government recognises these concerns and acknowledges that they are often shaped by broader socio-economic

pressures, including unemployment, inequality, strain on public services and concerns about crime. These are real challenges that many South Africans are facing daily, and government is actively working to address them.

At the same time, the Constitution guarantees every person the right to freedom of expression, assembly and peaceful protest. These rights are central to democratic participation and must be protected.

However, they must be exercised lawfully, peacefully, and with respect for the rights and dignity of others. When protests turn to intimidation, violence or discrimination, they undermine social cohesion and erode the very constitutional principles they seek to defend.

Government's position is



Nomonde Mnukwa,
GCIS Acting Director-General.

clear: the right to protest is protected, but it must always be exercised within the framework of the law.

Equally, government is acting decisively on the issue of illegal migration. A comprehensive response is being implemented, combining legislative reform, strengthened enforcement and system modernisation.

These include the passing of the Immigration Amendment Act of 2025, which strengthens the legal framework in line with constitutional principles and the approval of the *Revised White Paper on Citizenship, Immigration and Refugee Protection*, which sets a clear policy direction for a more effective, secure and modern migration system.

These reforms are supported by coordinated action across the Justice, Crime Prevention and Security Cluster. Recent engagements brought together government, political parties and community stakeholders to reinforce a common understanding: concerns must be addressed through lawful processes, and public demonstrations must comply with legal requirements, including proper notification, to ensure safety and accountability.

Cabinet has adopted a comprehensive approach to migration management. It is

Managing Migration Together

Our plan to tackle illegal migration

- Crack down on violations of immigration and labour laws
- Secure our borders
- Strengthen our immigration system
- Close the gaps in our laws and policies
- Work with other countries in Africa

endorsed by the President's Coordinating Council. This includes bringing together national, provincial and local government, as well as traditional leadership.

In his recent national address, President Cyril Ramaphosa outlined key actions that government is taking to respond to these challenges. These include intensifying the enforcement of immigration, labour and related laws; strengthening measures to prevent irregular and illegal entry into the country; taking decisive action to stamp out corruption within the immigration system; and advancing reforms to strengthen immigration laws and policies.

Government is also deepening cooperation with countries

across the African continent to build a coordinated regional response to migration pressures.

Government's response is not new; it is being intensified.

Over the past two financial years, more than 109 000 undocumented migrants have been deported, reflecting a significant increase in enforcement activity. This strengthened approach is supported by improved inter-agency coordination, enhanced use of technology to verify identities, and more effective border management systems.

At the same time, government is taking firm action to root out corruption within the immigration system. Since July 2024, dozens of officials implicated in fraud and corruption have been dismissed, while

arrests and prosecutions are ongoing through collaboration with law enforcement agencies. This decisive action is critical to restoring integrity, strengthening public confidence and ensuring that immigration laws are applied fairly and consistently.

For public servants, this moment calls for clarity, discipline and leadership. We cannot allow illegality to persist. At the same time, we cannot allow lawlessness in how we respond to it. The Constitution requires us to uphold both security and human dignity, without compromise.

As we commemorate 30 years of constitutional democracy, we are reminded that the strength of our Constitution lies not only in the rights it guarantees, but in how we choose to uphold and protect them.

Let us move forward with purpose; addressing the socio-economic challenges that drive frustration, strengthening our systems to combat crime and illegal migration, and ensuring that our actions consistently reflect the values of unity, dignity and the rule of law.

In upholding the Constitution, we affirm not only our rights, but our shared responsibility to build a just and cohesive society for all who live in South Africa. ❖

CSIR innovations drive

South Africa's transition to reliable, renewable energy



Centre Manager,
Dr Thabo Hlalele.

As winter sets in, electricity demand across South Africa is expected to rise as households turn to heating to keep warm. This seasonal pressure calls for an urgent need for innovative solutions to ensure uninterrupted power supply.

At the forefront of this effort is the Energy Research Centre at the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), where cutting-edge technologies and forward-looking strategies are helping to stabilise the grid while advancing the country's transition to renewable energy.

Speaking to *Public Sector Manager* magazine, Centre Manager, Dr Thabo Hlalele, explained that the CSIR is focused on supporting emerging markets that South Africa can unlock within the energy space. Central to this work is the development of cutting-edge tools and systems aimed at improving efficiency, reliability and sustainability.

One such innovation, devel-

oped in collaboration with the CSIR's sister cluster, NextGen Enterprises and Institutions, is a Solar Artificial Intelligence (AI) Defect Detection tool. This advanced system uses AI to detect solar panel damage that cannot be identified with the naked eye.

The technology combines electroluminescence cameras – specialised diagnostic imaging devices used to detect hidden internal defects in solar photovoltaic (PV) cells and modules – with AI to determine the extent of damage to solar panels with precision.

Unlocking wind energy

Beyond solar innovations, the centre is also contributing significantly to the growth of wind energy. In 2024, the CSIR, in partnership with local and international stakeholders, spearheaded the development of the Wind Atlas for South Africa.

This open-access, high-impact

tool maps the country's vast wind resources, enabling developers, investors and policymakers to accelerate the integration of large-scale wind energy into the national grid. It allows project developers to identify optimal locations for wind farms based on available wind resources.

"This project has essentially unlocked the wind industry in South Africa," Hlalele said. "We are currently in Phase Four and are exploring opportunities inland. Ultimately, this supports a capable state by providing investors with reliable information, making the renewable energy sector more attractive".

Advancing energy storage solutions

The Energy Research Centre is also making strides in energy storage, a crucial aspect for managing fluctuations in renewable energy supply.

One of its flagship initiatives is the Energy Storage Testbed, established under the World Bank's Energy Storage Partnership in collaboration with the Flemish Government and the Flemish Institute for Technological Research (VITO).

Designed to promote energy storage in developing countries, the testbed is helping to transform South Africa's battery test-



ing landscape through advanced infrastructure and strategic partnerships.

"It provides both reliability and performance testing for batteries, but more importantly, it helps benchmark their performance," Hlalele explained. "Where South Africa previously relied heavily on imported batteries, we now have the capability to assess whether those products meet our requirements".

Complementing this work is the CSIR's PV Module Quality and Reliability Testing Laboratory – the first of its kind in Africa. Equipped with world-class technology, the facility conducts performance, safety and stress

testing on PV modules to ensure that only high-quality systems suited to South Africa's unique climate are deployed.

Hlalele noted that it remains the only accredited laboratory of its kind in Sub-Saharan Africa, positioning South Africa as a leader in renewable energy testing and quality assurance.

Expanding access to electricity

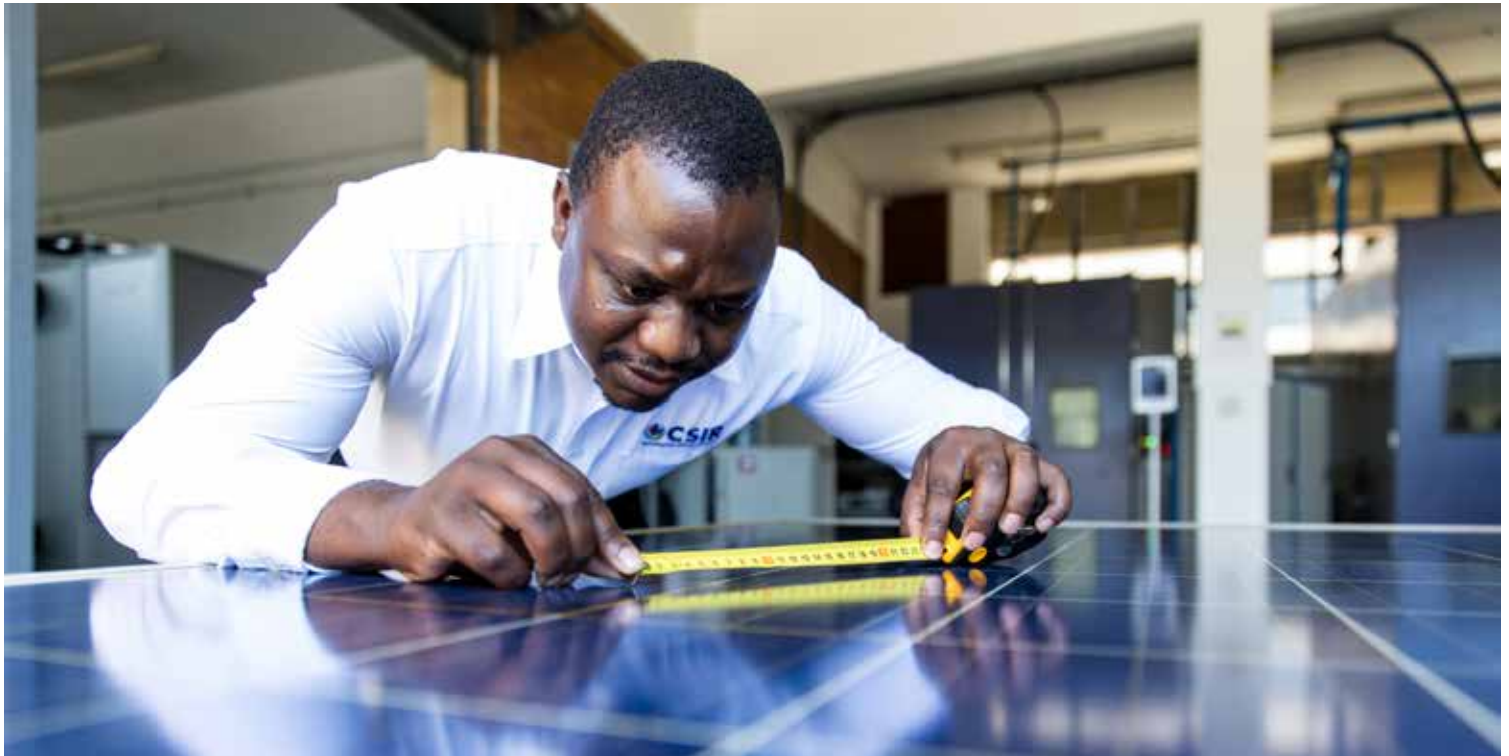
To modernise power systems, improve municipal resilience and advance rural electrification, the CSIR is also developing microgrids – localised, self-sufficient energy systems capable of generating, storing and distributing electricity within a defined

area such as a hospital, school or remote village.

Microgrids are particularly significant in the context of South Africa's energy landscape, where approximately 90.6% of households are connected to the grid, yet issues such as affordability, illegal connections and rapid urbanisation continue to pose challenges.

Hlalele believes microgrids provide a viable solution to bridging this gap while reducing pressure on existing infrastructure.

"Microgrids are among the frontrunners in innovative energy solutions," he said. "They can reduce the need for large-scale transmission infrastructure



while providing reliable, localised power”

In partnership with the Energy and Water Sector Education and Training Authority, the centre is also nurturing small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs) in the energy sector.

Each year, approximately 10 SMMEs participate in a 12-month development programme that equips them with both technical and business skills. Participants are also paired with mentors at the centre to strengthen their capabilities.

The programme focuses on enabling businesses to take advantage of emerging technologies such as solar, wind and battery storage, while building

sustainable enterprises within the renewable energy sector.

Now in its third year, the programme is set to conclude in the next two years.

Empowering future engineers

Through a new partnership with the European Union (EU), South Africa is positioning itself as a key player in the global green economy.

The CSIR has been selected to lead the Team Europe Initiative (OP-VET), which aims to develop a world-class battery raw materials value chain while aligning skills development, industrial investment and clean energy innovation.

Originating from the South

Africa–EU Clean Trade and Investment Partnership, the initiative will equip young people and women with skills spanning the entire battery value chain – from mining and refining to recycling critical minerals.

“The partnership commits South Africa and the EU to deeper cooperation across the extraction, processing, refining and recycling of critical raw materials,” Hlalele said. “At the same time, it supports decarbonisation, clean supply chains and inclusive economic growth through investment, skills development and job creation.”

The OP-VET project will strengthen Technical and Vocational Education and Training institutions and the broader

skills ecosystem to deliver demand-driven, employment-focused training aligned with the battery industry.

It will also support the development of new occupational qualifications, short courses, and work-integrated learning opportunities through partnerships with the private sector – ensuring graduates gain practical experience and clearer pathways into employment.

The pilot phase, scheduled between July and October 2026, will begin in Mpumalanga and the Northern Cape. A limited number of participants will be selected to allow for a focused trial phase and the identification of areas for improvement. ❖



1 CRACK DOWN ON VIOLATIONS

- Authorities to identify and deport undocumented foreign nationals
- Set up dedicated immigration courts
- Increase inspections of companies employing undocumented workers
- Recruit 10,000 additional labour inspectors
- Increase penalties for employers who breach the Immigration Act



THE PRESIDENCY
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Evolving with democracy:

The future of healthcare financing in South Africa

Photo: Supplied by the CMS



Council for Medical Schemes

Over the past three decades, South Africa's private healthcare financing environment has evolved significantly, reflecting the broader growth and maturity of the country's constitutional democracy. This progress has been underpinned by a clear constitutional and legislative framework, reinforced by robust regulation through the

Medical Schemes Act of 1998.

The Act has been instrumental in strengthening protection for members, improving governance within the industry, and ensuring that access to healthcare benefits is managed in a fair, transparent, and rules-based manner.

In an interview with *Public Sector Manager* magazine, the

Chairperson of the Council for Medical Schemes (CMS), Dr Thandi Mabeba, said the celebration of 30 years of South Africa's constitutional democracy is a milestone comprising a celebration of progress and a reminder of the work that still lies ahead.

"It is an important moment to pause and reflect on how far the

country has come in advancing dignity, rights, and access to healthcare for all citizens. At the same time, it is important to recognise that challenges remain, especially in relation to affordability and rising healthcare costs: pressures that affect households directly and continue to shape the way the system must evolve," she said.



Photo: Supplied by the CMS

Dr Thandi Mabeba

Mabeba is at the helm of South Africa's statutory regulator of the medical schemes industry, which ensures that medical schemes operate fairly, transparently, and in a financially responsible way, while always keeping the interests of members at the centre.

Part of the council's mandate is to ensure that members understand their rights, that schemes treat people fairly, and that complaints are investigated and resolved.

National Health Insurance

For Mabeba, the signing of the National Health Insurance (NHI) Act of 2023 marks a significant milestone in South Africa's health reform journey. Importantly, however, the Act does not repeal the Medical Schemes Act of 1998. Instead, it provides for a complementary coexistence and a phased transition, with most of its key provisions still subject to proclamation. As a result, implementation is expected to unfold gradually over an extended period.

"In this sense, the CMS mandate has not fallen away or been displaced. Rather, it continues to operate within a transitional and evolving healthcare financing architecture," she explained.

Evolving role

Within this context, the CMS's advisory function has become even more prominent. The organisation continues

to provide guidance to the Minister of Health on regulatory and policy matters, now within a reform environment that is both complex and fast evolving.

This includes a growing expectation that the CMS will contribute as a key technical institution supporting the broader design and transition of the health system.

"This includes advising on the alignment of prescribed minimum benefits with emerging NHI benefit structures, supporting reforms aimed at strengthening risk pooling, affordability, benefit standardisation and helping to clarify the demarcation between medical schemes, insurance products, and services intended for funding under the NHI framework," she explained.

In addition, the CMS contributes essential regulatory data, actuarial analysis, and sector intelligence that inform the purchasing and system design considerations of the NHI Fund.

These contributions, she said, are not new responsibilities created by the NHI Act, but rather a natural extension of the CMS's accumulated regulatory expertise and its established statutory purpose under the Medical Schemes Act.

In this way, the CMS continues to occupy a unique and important position within South Africa's health financing landscape.

"The CMS remains a custodian of the existing regulatory framework, while also serving as a technical anchor supporting the country's gradual



transition towards a more integrated and equitable health system," she added.

Universal health coverage

The current journey towards implementation of the NHI forms part of the broader national effort to move closer to universal health coverage.

While the system is still evolving, Mabeba said the intention is clear: to ensure that access to quality healthcare is not determined only by income or employment but that it is progressively expanded to all South Africans in a fair and equitable way.

"The regulatory system continues to safeguard financial stability, promote transparency, and ensure that members are treated fairly, even as the broader health system undergoes change," she emphasised.

The future of the CMS, within the context the NHI reform, is increasingly defined by continuity and purposeful evolution. Its legal foundation continues to provide stability and certainty in a sector that remains central to the country's health financing.

At the same time, the CMS is consciously expanding and repositioning its role to remain

"A key area of involvement is ongoing policy work on

regulatory gaps that arise at the intersection of the current medical schemes environment and the evolving NHI framework," she said. "This includes participation in discussions on the development of structured, multi-layered negotiation platforms aimed at improving coordination across the health system".

The forums are intended to support more transparent and coherent engagement between stakeholders on issues such as benefits, pricing, and service delivery areas that are becoming increasingly complex in a transitioning system.

The CMS is also actively represented on a range of technical committees and working groups convened by the National Department of Health.

"This engagement not only strengthens the quality of decision-making but also ensures that the regulatory voice is present in shaping system-wide reforms. Importantly, this expanded role is not a shift away from CMS mandate, but rather an extension of it," she explained.

In essence, Mabeba said the CMS is evolving into a more visible and influential institution within the health landscape—one that continues to provide regulatory stability, while also

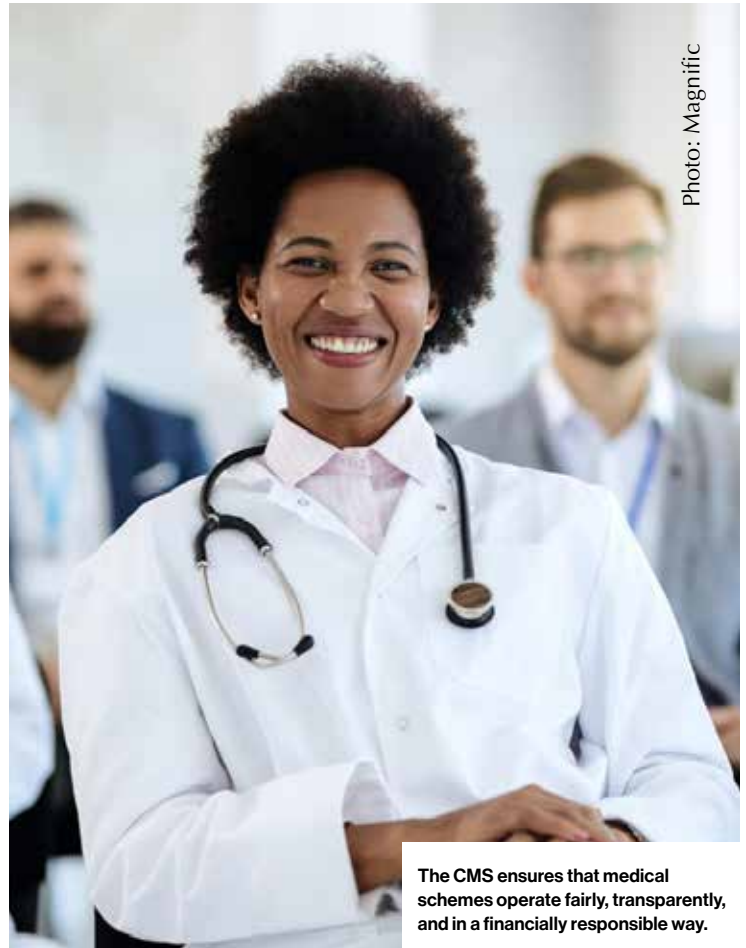


Photo: Magnific

The CMS ensures that medical schemes operate fairly, transparently, and in a financially responsible way.

contributing meaningfully to the national dialogue on reform, integration, and the future

architecture of healthcare in South Africa.

Mabeba is a seasoned governance leader, clinician, medico-legal expert and health economist who began her career in medicine. Her academic qualifications include a Bachelor of Laws, a Master's degree in Medical Law and Ethics, a Postgraduate Diploma in Health Economics, and a Certificate in Corporate Governance.

Under her leadership, the CMS has achieved its highest governance performance score of 82%, surpassing the public sector benchmark of 74% and closely aligning with the private sector benchmark of 84%. ❖

Managing Migration Together



2 SECURE OUR BORDERS

- Prioritise funding for border security
- Deploy ground sensors, satellite monitoring and drones along our borders
- Redevelop and upgrade the busiest ports of entry
- Relocate refugee reception centres to border posts



THE PRESIDENCY
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Engineering her rise: Amanda Nkoe's path to leadership

For Amanda Nkoe, the decision to pursue engineering was not a random choice made at the end of high school.

It was a path carefully guided by family influence, personal curiosity and a growing appreciation for the tangible impact of infrastructure.

Today, the Bloemfontein-born engineer serves as Maintenance Manager: Planning within Network Asset Management at Transnet Rail Infrastructure Manager (TRIM), a role that reflects more than a decade of steady growth from trainee to strategic leader.

Growing up in the Free State capital, the 35-year-old, in an interview with the *Public Sector Manager* (PSM) magazine, said she was exposed to the world of construction through her father, who worked in civil construction.

"What I love about engineer-

ing is seeing everything you have developed, from theoretical principles to holding it in your hands, and contributing positively to society at large," said.

With a clear career path in mind, Nkoe enrolled at the Central University of Technology, where she pursued a degree in Civil Engineering. She later completed a postgraduate diploma in Project Management through MANCOSA and is currently advancing her studies towards a Master of Engineering in Civil Engineering at the University of Cape Town.

Engineering for impact

Engineering, she realised, offered the opportunity to create systems and structures that directly improve people's lives.

"I have further strength-



Amanda Nkoe

ened my technical foundation through specialised certifications in track geotechnology, continuously welded rail, and bridge design," she says. "This combination of engineering depth and project management capability allows me to operate effectively across both technical and strategic environments, from on-site execution to executive decision-making".

A beneficiary of youth empowerment initiatives

Nkoe's entry into the rail sector came in 2013, when she joined Transnet as a Track Technician in Training. It was her first opportunity to apply classroom knowledge to real-world infrastructure.

It was during this programme that she developed a strong technical foundation through hands-on experience.

Working at track level provided her with practical insight into how rail systems operate – from maintenance routines to safety procedures. This early exposure would later prove invaluable as she moved into leadership positions.

A year later, she secured a place in the Transnet graduate programme and joined the Transnet Coal Line, one of the country's most critical

freight routes. The experience broadened her understanding of large-scale infrastructure operations.

"Over the past decade, this progression from trackside operations to strategic leadership has given me a comprehensive understanding of both the technical and economic dimensions of rail infrastructure".

Defining career moments

As Nkoe gained experience, she took on increasingly complex responsibilities. Her progression through Transnet was marked by consistent performance, technical growth and a willingness to lead in challenging situations.

"One of the most defining moments in my career was leading the rapid restoration of a major rail corridor, following severe weather damage," she recalled. "Despite significant operational constraints, my team successfully rebuilt critical sections of track within tight timelines".

That moment, she added, represented more than technical achievement, saying it reinforced her belief in the importance of teamwork and resilience.

"Seeing the first train safely pass through the restored

section remains a standout achievement," she said.

Experiences like this strengthened her confidence and positioned her for leadership roles that required both technical expertise and strategic planning.

Her current role at the parastatal entity places her at the centre of long-term infrastructure decision-making. In it, she leads multidisciplinary teams, manages maintenance budgets, and coordinates both planned and emergency interventions while maintaining strict safety and operational standards.

"I also engage with key stakeholders, including regulators and operational partners, to ensure alignment and efficient service delivery," she added.

Driving innovation through technology

Her work also increasingly involves adopting modern technologies to enhance infrastructure reliability.

"A key focus has been implementing digital asset management systems and predictive maintenance models, shifting operations from reactive to proactive approaches," she explained.

This shift reflects the growing

role of technology in infrastructure management and the importance of forward-thinking leadership.

Recognition and representation

Nkoe's steady progression has been recognised beyond her workplace. Being named a finalist in the 2025 Standard Bank Top Women Awards marked a significant milestone in her career.

For her, the recognition was not just about personal achievement but about visibility for women in engineering.

"It validates the demanding, often unseen work within the rail industry and reinforces that engineering excellence and purposeful leadership are both recognised and valued," she added.

Like many women in engineering, Nkoe has encountered challenges related to perceptions of authority and capability.

"A recurring challenge has been overcoming the 'authority gap,' where technical capability is sometimes questioned based on perception rather than performance," she reflected.

Her approach to overcoming this challenge has been rooted in consistency and self-improvement.



"I have navigated this by consistently delivering results, maintaining technical excellence, and continuously upskilling," she said. "By showing up, leading from the front and remaining authentic, I have reinforced that credibility is built through action, not assumptions"

Mentorship and support

Mentorship also played a critical role in her development, crediting both senior leaders and technicians for shaping her professional mindset formally and informally.

"A senior female engineering leader has provided strategic guidance and resilience, while experienced technicians on the ground have offered invaluable practical insight."

One principle from these mentors continues to guide her work.

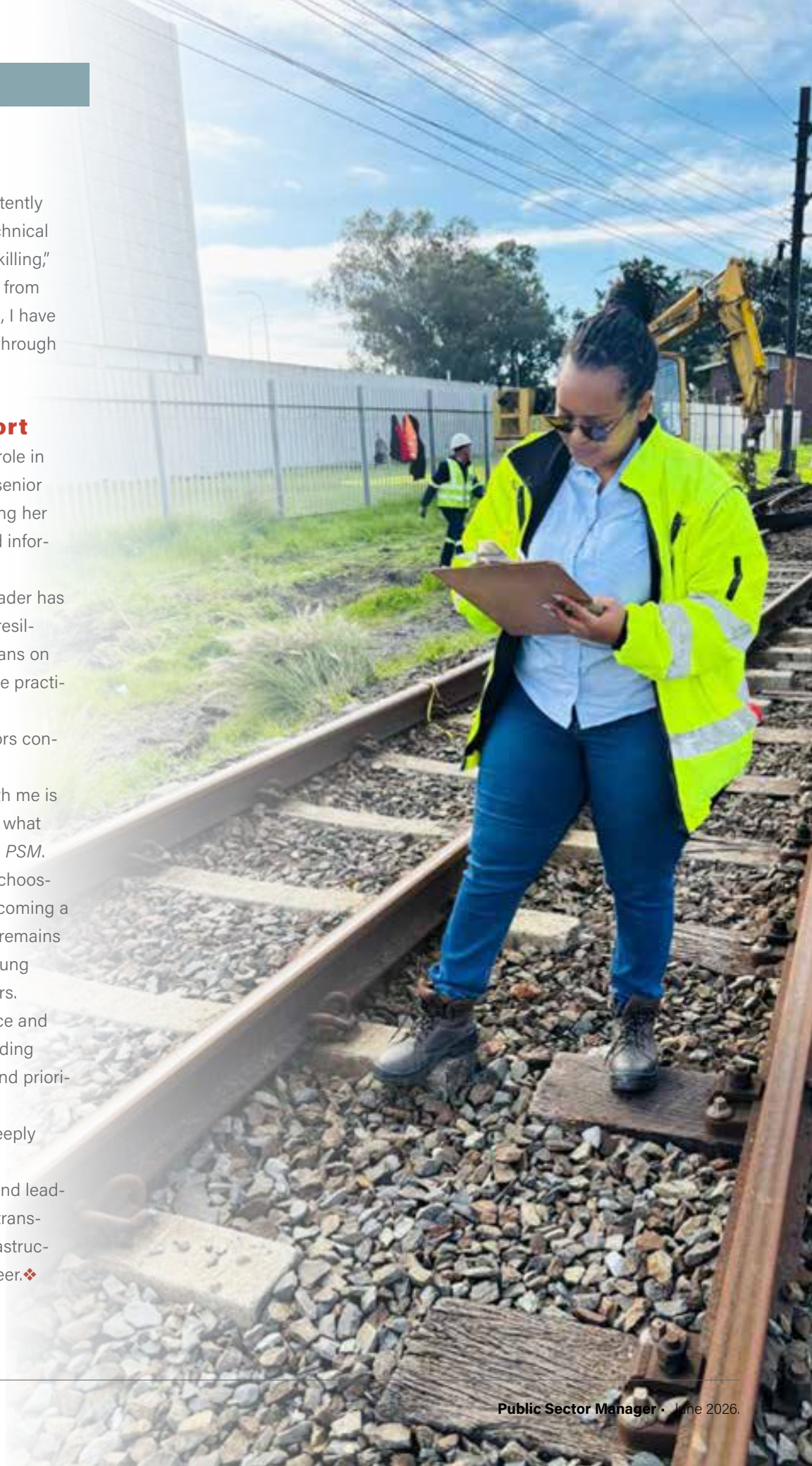
"One lesson that has stayed with me is simple: excellence in execution is what ultimately earns respect," she told *PSM*.

Reflecting on her journey from choosing engineering as a career to becoming a leader in rail infrastructure, Nkoe remains passionate about encouraging young women to pursue technical careers.

"Take your place with confidence and lead with purpose... Focus on building technical depth, remain curious and prioritise impact over visibility."

For her, engineering remains deeply connected to national progress.

"By committing to excellence and leadership, young women can play a transformative role in the future of infrastructure," concluded the young engineer. ❖



Managing Migration Together



3 STRENGTHEN OUR IMMIGRATION SYSTEM

- Crack down on corruption and inefficiency at Home Affairs
- Build an Intelligent Population Register with biometric data
- Expand Smart ID access and phase out green ID books
- Extend biometrics to all international airports and the busiest land ports
- End the abuse of the Traffic Registration Number



THE PRESIDENCY
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Prodigies deserve leadership opportunities, TCTA CFO urges

In 2012, when Andisa Zinja was 27 – half a decade into her fledgling chartered accountancy career (CA) – she reached an epoch.

Fretting and uncertain, she decided to accept the offer of Chief Financial Officer (CFO) at the Eastern Cape Socio-Economic Consultative Council (ECSECC), a promotion from her Finance Manager role. She remained in the position for eight years.

Draped in a chalk-white A-line dress and a black blazer acces-

sorised with a gold necklace and a matching headwrap to lull the cold front enveloping Centurion in Tshwane, Zinja welcomes the *Public Sector Manager (PSM)* team for an interview. The meeting is at the Trans-Caledon Tunnel Authority (TCTA) offices, where she has been CFO since April 2025.

As South Africa marks Youth Month and commemorates 50 years since the 1976 student uprisings, Zinja embodies what is possible when the youth are offered opportu-





Photo: Magnific

Augmentation of the existing Vaal River Eastern Subsystem (VRESS), which supplies water to the coal fields of eastern Mpumalanga

nities. The bureaucrat believes that young people must actively pursue and embrace opportunities, even when they feel uncertain.

Give young people a chance

She also encourages leaders to create more opportunities for young people in leadership spaces.

“As leaders, we can learn more from the youth as they learn from us as well,” she said. “If we bring in more youth, especially in leadership spaces and leadership roles, then there might be a positive contribution that they can make.”

Originally from Gqeberha in the Eastern Cape, Zinja’s journey to becoming a public finance

professional was not straightforward. As a young girl, she imagined a completely different future for herself.

“I wanted to become a therapist,” she explained. “I grew up during the times of the *Bold and the Beautiful* and *Days Of Our Lives* playing on TV [television]. In one of the shows, there was a character called Marlana, who was a therapist and was called ‘doc’ and I wanted to be a therapist.

“I wanted to work with people. I wanted to listen to people’s problems and try resolve those problems”.

However, her natural talent for accounting opened another path.

“At school, I was so good in accounting, but I did not know

about the chartered accountant route. We only found out when we would have universities come to talk to students at school, and when you are in varsity then you would have your big firms coming in to say, ‘hey, there’s this career opportunity’”.

Career journey

Her professional journey began at PwC, where she served as an article clerk between 2007 and 2010. The experience laid the technical foundation for her future leadership roles in both auditing and financial management.

She later joined the Auditor-General of South Africa as an Assistant Audit Manager from 2010 to 2011.

In 2012, Zinja joined the

ECSECC as Finance Manager before being promoted later that year to CFO.

Looking back, she believes accepting the offer was one of the defining moments of her career.

“Had I said no to that opportunity, I do not think I would be here,” she reflected.

“At that time, it was scary for me, because ‘ha! why are you saying you are offering me this opportunity? I am only 27. You are asking me to be a CFO?’ With that fear, I said; ‘Yes.”

That decision would ultimately shape the trajectory of her professional life and become a lesson she now shares with young professionals across South Africa.

Shining star

In November 2025, she pulled a major coup when she was named the 2025 Public Sector CFO of the Year. For Zinja, the accolade was also a celebration of excellence within South Africa’s public sector – a space she believes is too often viewed through a negative lens.

“The award was an affirmation and a validation for me that I am doing something right, especially in the public sector,” she said. “You know, there is always something negative in most cases, in the media or how

people perceive the public sector. To be a female in the public sector receiving this accolade, for me, it means that there are good stories to tell within the public sector”.

As CFO of a state-owned entity responsible for financing and implementing bulk raw water infrastructure projects, Zinja occupies a strategically important financial leadership position. Her role directly supports the development of critical water infrastructure that underpins economic growth, industrial development and service delivery.

Managing with compassion

In November 2020, she joined the Council for Medical Schemes (CMS) as CFO during the organisation’s most tumultuous period.

“I moved to the CMS during a very volatile time. There was a lot of bad publicity in the news. There was a lot of change happening within the entity, there were quite a significant number of irregularities, there was the Special Investigating Unit in the mix”.

“There were executives who were dismissed, disciplinaries; it was just volatile”.

The environment was marked by instability, mistrust and severe financial challenges. Employees were fearful, morale

was low and the institution faced uncertainty.

“I had to learn to work more with people, to earn people’s trust as a leader,” she explained. “I had to learn that we are human first, before we are even employees”.

“If you then can relate to people on that level, you can earn their trust and their respect, and then you will be able to work with people. You will be able to pull the people together so you can achieve whatever outcome that you set yourself to achieve.”

Creating stability

One of the biggest challenges she encountered was the organisation’s financial position.

“When I came in, the CMS was both illiquid and insolvent, basically,” she recalled. “I remember working with the Finance Manager. I asked for the cash flows and the forecast, and you could see that the year end is March, and then you look at the numbers, and you are like, ‘we will not be able to pay salaries in February because we do not have the money”.

“I [would] sit by myself, like, ‘Whoa! Why did I come here? I left my comfortable job there in the Eastern Cape, and I am coming here, and we will not have money in February to pay salaries”.

Over the next four years, she

helped stabilise the institution financially and improve governance processes.

“When I left, we were liquid, we were solvent – we were out of the ICU”.

New challenge

Soon afterwards, Zinja joined TCTA.

Despite previously avoiding the infrastructure sector, she decided to embrace a new challenge.

“I have always said I would never go to an infrastructure sector.”

At the TCTA, Zinja quickly recognised the scale and significance of the organisation’s responsibilities.

“We need to borrow money from the capital market to fund these bulk water infrastructure projects,” she explained.

She emphasised that financial discipline, governance and organisational credibility directly affect borrowing costs and ultimately impact ordinary South Africans.

“If you do not have your house in order, the cost of borrowing is higher, and then you have to pass that on to you and me, the normal citizens.”

For Zinja, modern CFOs must



The TCTA plays a critical role in ensuring the continuity and sustainability of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project.

go beyond financial reporting and become strategic leaders who focus on impact and long-term value.

“As CFOs, we are moving to more of value and impact for the organisations, not just numbers,” she said. “The numbers tell a story.”

“We need to be more future-driven than just looking at history. History does help but then, if you are not more future-driven and thinking of impact and value, and also stakeholder confidence, then you are doing absolutely nothing.” ❖

Managing Migration Together



4 CLOSE THE GAPS IN LAWS AND POLICIES

- Develop a single, unified legal framework on migration
- Implement policy limiting employment of documented foreign nationals
- Strengthen prosecution of employers hiring undocumented workers
- Register small and informal businesses
- Support local traders through the Spaza Shop Fund



THE PRESIDENCY
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Bafana Bafana inspire us to hope and to strive



In just under two weeks' time, Bafana Bafana will participate in the opening match in this year's FIFA World Cup against Mexico.

They carry with them the best wishes of more than 62 million South Africans who will be cheering them on at every stage of the tournament. Bafana Bafana are taking part in the World Cup for the first time since we hosted the event in 2010.

At a send-off dinner hosted by The Presidency last week, we congratulated the team going to the World Cup. Football is defined by camaraderie, teamwork and sportspersonship. The efforts of all the players in qualifying for the tournament deserve credit and recognition.

I call on all South Africans to rally behind our team and show their support. Let us wear the team colours and fly the flag.

It has been a long and difficult journey to transform the fortunes of Bafana Bafana. Credit must go to the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture, the South African Football

Association, the leagues, clubs and sponsors for their commitment to developing local football over many years. The coach and the players deserve our collective recognition.

Efforts are ongoing to professionalise the sport, develop new talent and promote football as a recreational activity for youth in communities across the country.

Bafana Bafana will be ambassadors for our country and what we stand for. The diversity of the squad and technical team is a reminder to the world that we are a united nation of many races, languages and cultures.

We are a land of opportunity where a young person born into difficult circumstances is able to represent their country at the highest level of international sport. The transformation of sport in South Africa is a reflection of the values of respect, tolerance, fairness and inclusivity that underpin our constitutional order.

As we know from experience, sport has a tremendous capacity to unite



people across the barriers of geography, race, gender and class. We remember the iconic moment at the 1995 Rugby World Cup final when President Nelson Mandela walked onto the field wearing a Springbok jersey to congratulate the Bokke.

That moment has been immortalised in writings, memoirs and film. It captured the spirit of the times, when South Africa's democracy was barely a year old. The country was energised by the team's victory, but more so by what it represented to a new nation that was emerging from a deeply divided past.

As I told the Bafana Bafana squad last week, the people of South Africa expect them to bring the trophy home. Yet regardless of how Bafana Bafana fare

in the tournament, their participation is as rich with meaning as the 1995 Rugby World Cup.

Much like the national squad, the country has emerged from a prolonged period of difficulty and now looks to the future with hope.

Our democracy has matured and is flourishing, our Constitution has been the supreme law of the land for three decades, and we have embarked on a National Dialogue to chart a new course for our country. We are seeing the signs of an economic recovery and growing confidence in our economic prospects.

So as we cheer our team on from the stands, at fan zones and in our homes, we should also cheer ourselves on as a country. We should celebrate how far we have come in build-

ing a united, non-racial, non-sexist and democratic South Africa.

And like Bafana Bafana, we should keep working and striving until we have achieved a country in which all our people can thrive.

For 90 minutes, as they play for our country, we will not be divided by language, race, province, club or circumstance. For 90 minutes, as they play, we will simply be South Africans standing together behind our national team and behind our flag.

One Team. One Nation. Behind Bafana. Behind South Africa. United by our Flag, inspired by our Team. 62 million cheering voices. One Dream.

****This message
was first published
on 1 June 2026***

National Orders ceremony celebrates achievers across sectors



President Ramaphosa with the recipients of the 2026 National Orders in recognition of their exceptional contributions to society.

There are moments when a nation pauses, not just to celebrate excellence, but to reflect on the journey that made such excellence possible. The 2026 National Orders ceremony, held at the Sefako Makgatho Presidential Guest House in Tshwane recently, was one such moment.

Set against a backdrop of powerful national milestones – 30 years of the Constitution, 50 years since the 1976 Youth Uprising, 60 years since the District Six forced removals and 70 years since the 1956 Women's March – the event carried

a deeper resonance. It was not merely an awards ceremony but was a bridge between history and the present, honouring individuals whose contributions continue to shape South Africa's democratic story.

South Africa has long been synonymous with recognising its citizens for outstanding achievements across sport, the arts, science and social development. The National Orders stand as the country's highest form of recognition, bestowed by the President on citizens and eminent foreign nationals who

embody the ideals of a free, just and inclusive society.

This year, 38 recipients – some honoured posthumously – were recognised for their contributions across diverse fields; including music, politics, medicine, literature, education and human rights. Their stories reflect a shared thread of resilience, creativity, and service to the nation.

President Cyril Ramaphosa, Grand Patron of the National Orders, described the awardees as patriots who have brought life to the dream of a democratic

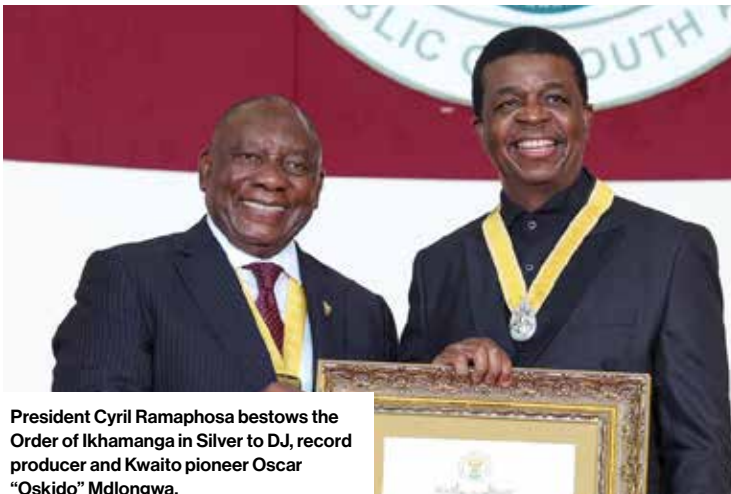
South Africa.

"In a land of innumerable heroes and heroines, the South African people have decided that it is these men and women they will lift to the sky. This is the greatest honour," he said.

Icons of achievement and influence

Among those honoured were figures whose impact reaches far beyond their respective disciplines. Three-time Rugby World Cup-winning Springbok coach Rassie Erasmus was recognised for his contribution to sport and national pride, while kwaito pioneer Oscar 'Oskido' Mdlongwa was celebrated for shaping South Africa's cultural soundscape.

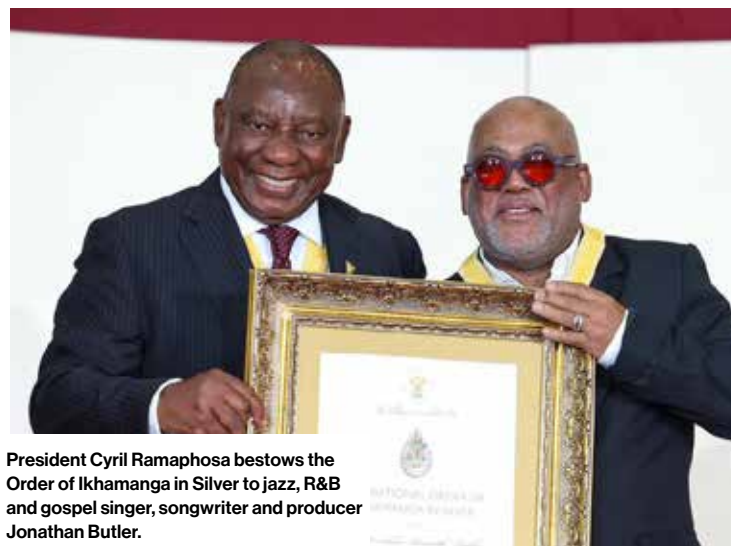
Renowned flautist Wouter Kellerman was acknowledged for using music as a tool of unity, and Professor Tulio de Oliveira received recognition for his leadership in scientific research during the COVID-19 pandemic, including his role in identifying the Omicron variant.



President Cyril Ramaphosa bestows the Order of Ikhamanga in Silver to DJ, record producer and Kwaito pioneer Oscar "Oskido" Mdlongwa.



President Cyril Ramaphosa bestows the Order of Ikhamanga in Silver to Andiswa Precious Gebashe for her contribution to the Deaf community.



President Cyril Ramaphosa bestows the Order of Ikhamanga in Silver to jazz, R&B and gospel singer, songwriter and producer Jonathan Butler.

Inclusion and representation

For some recipients, the honour reflects not only personal achievement but also advocacy for often overlooked communities. Andiswa Gebashe, a leading voice for the South African Sign Language (SASL) and the deaf community, received the Order of Ikhamanga in Silver.

Speaking on the sidelines of the ceremony, Gebashe emphasised that while progress has been made, more work is needed to integrate the SASL into mainstream arts and media.

Her message highlighted a central theme of the event: that recognition must go hand in hand with continued efforts to build a more inclusive society.

The ceremony also honoured international allies through the Order of the Companions of O.R. Tambo in Silver, awarded to individuals who demonstrated solidarity with South Africa during its liberation struggle.

Among them was Naomi Kleinfeld from the Netherlands, who risked her life working within South Africa as an ally of the liberation movement. Her commitment to justice and opposition to apartheid reflects the global support that helped shape the country's path to freedom.

Other recipients included

Pierre De Heer (Netherlands), Teresa Hillary Clarke (USA), Antonio da Silva Gomes Cordeiro (Mozambique, posthumous) and Professor Chérif Keïta (Mali).

Carrying the legacy

For others the awards carry deep personal significance. Lindumuzi Mngoma, accepting the Order of Ikhamanga in Gold on behalf of his late father, Professor Khabi Mngoma, reflected on the sacrifices made by artists during apartheid.

He welcomed the recognition of musicians but expressed concern that younger generations often see artistry primarily as entertainment rather than a powerful form of cultural expression and resistance.

"It would be great if today's youth can come together in their communities to participate in music and other forms of art to keep the legacy of past musicians alive," he said.

Scan the QR code to access the National Orders booklet.





eThekweni intensifies fight against fraud and corruption

Director of eThekweni Municipality City Integrity and Investigations Directorate, Jimmy Ngcobo, says curbing fraud and corruption requires a multipronged approach.

Robust collaboration between law enforcement agencies, business and residents is key in good governance and fighting against fraud and corruption. Our collaboration with law enforcement agencies must have effect on curtailing misconduct statistics.

The massive achievement we have accomplished is a true reflection of working with multilateral stakeholders to curtail beneficiaries of fraud and corruption. We would like to express our appreciation to stakeholders who have heeded the call to anonymously report any irregularities and misconduct. eThekweni Municipality has suffered an immense financial loss derived from theft and fraud.

The municipality's City Integrity and Investigations Directorate's (CIID) mandate is derived

and aligned with the National Anti-Corruption Strategy. The directorate administratively reports to the City Manager and provides oversight reporting to key governance structures, including the Municipal Public Accounts Committee, Integrated Risk Management Committee, Financial Misconduct Disciplinary Board, and the Audit and Risk Committee.

Fighting fraud and corruption

The municipality has taken a firm stance against fraud and corruption to swiftly investigate the reported cases. Our turnaround time to complete an investigation is six months. This may take longer, especially in cases referred to courts.

We are aware of the members of the public who relen-

tly bribe Municipal officials in exchange for employment. This is fraud and corruption, which is a criminal offense and we will catch them.

Two employees were prosecuted for fraud late last year and earlier this year. One was found guilty of creating fraudulent purchase orders, falsifying signatures and approving invoices for goods that were never received.

The second was sentenced to eight years' imprisonment for tampering with CCTV systems. We will continue collaborating with external law enforcement agencies to combat fraud and corruption.

In the second quarter of 2025/26, a total of 136 cases of fraud and corruption were investigated, 171 infrastructure theft cases were investigated, 24 cases of employees who were

implicated has been recommended for disciplinary hearings, 14 cases were recommended for recoveries, two services providers to be blacklisted and three criminal cases were registered with law enforcement.

The municipality has adopted a zero-tolerance stance against fraud, corruption, and the violation of human rights. Building an ethical, corruption-free organisation is a key focus for the municipality.

In November 2025, six employees from eThekweni municipality were arrested for the theft of asphalt tar in Inanda. They were found transporting the asphalt tar and failed to produce a job card to explain why and where they were transporting it to.

In another instance a man purporting to be a municipal employee was caught red-hand-

ed fraudulently filling diesel at one of the petrol stations, where the City's fleet refuel.

The man was arrested after a tip-off from the Municipal City Fleet Directorate stating that there were municipal vehicles filling diesel more than 10 times a day.

The culprit had four vehicles fitted with a 750-litre fuel tank at the base of each single cab van. The diesel was stored in these tanks and resold. Each vehicle generated about R78 000 a day. The suspect was doing rounds everyday filling diesel at over 15 petrol stations that the municipality had contracts with.

During the 2024/25 financial year, 420 cases were resolved including the disconnection of a hospital that had illegally connected to the Municipal grid. The CIID also conducted civil recovery of about R27 million and curbed infrastructure theft.

From July 2025 to March 2026, the CIID finalised 250

fraud and corruption cases, 199 were for infrastructure theft and vandalism cases. Off the 250 cases, 23 were recommended for recoveries and are quantifiable to the value of just over R100 million.

We remain resolute and will not be influenced by politicians or executive management in carrying out our duties. Any implicated officials will be held accountable. We have the authority to investigate municipal employees, entities, councillors and service providers.

Collaboration

Working with the National Prosecuting Authority, Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation – Hawks and the South African Police Service clearly strengthen our commitment to curtail criminal activities.

Our strategic vision is to continue evolving the CIID from a traditional internal investigative component into a professional

forensic investigation directorate aligned with the standards of the broader criminal justice system.

This transformation is critical in ensuring that municipal forensic investigations produce evidence capable of sustaining both disciplinary accountability and criminal prosecution. We have met with law enforcement agencies to iron out some of the challenges that are hindrances to successful apprehensions

It is a collaboration between investigators and prosecutors that investigations translate into effective admissible, reliable and persuasive evidence in the court of law.

Our responsibility is not only to investigate fraud, corruption, irregularities and misconducts, but to ensure the recovery of unlawfully diverted Municipality funds. We identify, freeze, confiscate, and recover the proceeds of crime. In carrying out this mandate, we are guided

by relevant legislation, including the Prevention and Combating of Corrupt Activities Act of 2004, the Prevention of Organised Crime Act, the Municipal Finance Management Act of 1998 and the Cybercrimes Act of 2020.

We call upon prosecutors, investigators, auditors, law enforcement agencies and municipal officials, businesses and residents to operate as partners with a shared and common mission. Let us work together to defend and protect resources that are susceptible to fraudsters, let us hold them accountable for their actions.

Residents and stakeholders are encouraged to report fraud and corruption to the CIID on 0800 20 20 20 or 031 311 4002, or via email at ombuds@durban.gov.za.



Highly concentrated markets delay economic participation



The Competition Commission hands over the Economy Concentration Tracker Report to Minister Parks Tau

A pointed reminder to society of why the wheels of economic participation must turn faster is found in the words of former President Nelson Mandela: "A nation is transformed when its people choose responsibility and excellence as acts of freedom".

When markets are tight, the

economy feels tight. The Competition Commission's second Concentration Report is indicative of steps in the right direction, but it delivers a blunt message: in too many parts of the economy, economic contenders still struggle to enter, survive and scale.

If we want faster growth and

more jobs, competition has to be practical, not rhetorical.

Understanding market concentration

Think of the last time a price hike rippled through your business. Fuel hikes, freight follows, packaging rises, and everyone

down the chain gets squeezed. That squeeze is not only about inflation. It is also about who has the power to set terms in the middle of the economy.

That power is what economists refer to as "concentration". In plain terms, it is a market where a few firms can raise prices, restrict access, or decide

which suppliers get a chance. The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have warned that high concentration drags on growth and jobs, a concern echoed in government's Medium Term Development Plan. Closed markets make for a smaller economy.

The report gives an economy-wide view of where power sits and where it is shifting. There is real movement. The share of highly concentrated markets fell by about five percentage points, and most sectors that were highly or moderately concentrated became less so. It is not a victory lap. It is proof that markets can open.

The hard part is where concentration is most stubborn: the "pipes and platforms" of the economy. Energy inputs, transport corridors and communications networks still show durable concentration, often with half to two-thirds of sub-sectors sitting in the highly or moderately concentrated range. These are the cost base of everything else.

When access to fuel, freight, ports, data or spectrum is controlled by a few, every downstream business pays, and every entrant starts metres behind.

Dominance vs competition

A market with a few big players can still be competitive if they genuinely fight for customers. The

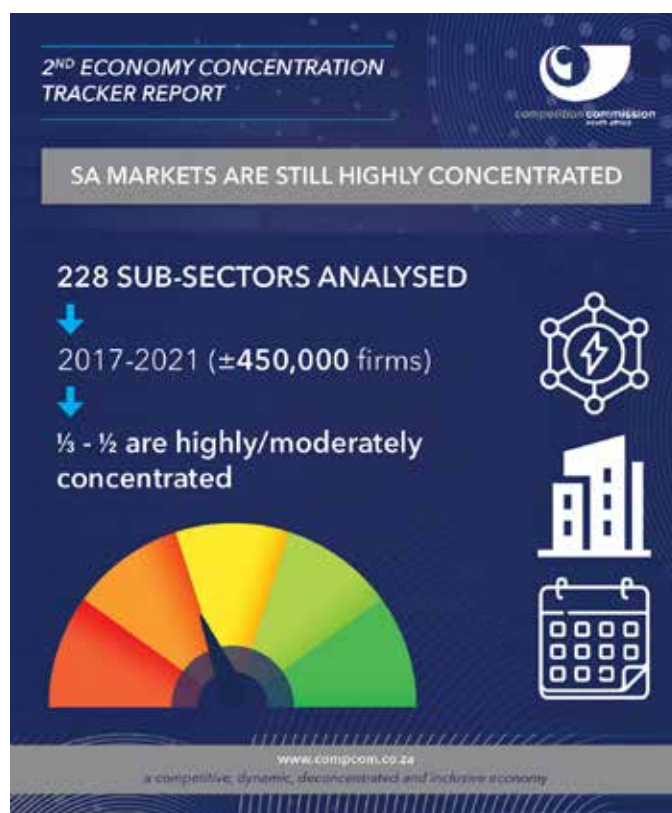
bigger risk is a single dominant firm that can choke rivals through exclusive contracts, control of infrastructure, data, or standards. The tougher question is this: can a challenger realistically grow?

The report's most uncomfortable finding is participation. South Africa has many micro businesses, but too few firms that graduate into stable, job-creating mid-sized companies. Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) account for only about 22% of economic turnover here, compared with more than 50% in many Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development economies. Medium-sized companies make up only around 4% of firms.

Scaling blockages for MSMEs

Scaling is where the blockage shows. The top 10% of firms account for about 91% of economic activity, while the bottom 50% account for roughly 1%. The COVID-19 then hit smaller firms hardest: 22% of MSMEs shrank, and exit rates rose to 12% from an average of 8% before the pandemic. Yet MSMEs are twice as employment-intensive as large firms, accounting for about 44% of jobs while representing only 22% of turnover.

So what now? The report points to three places where action can unlock competition quickly: enforcement that clears unfair



obstacles, regulation that stops blocking entry, and technology that widens choice.

Start with enforcement. Competition law is not anti-business. It stops dominant firms from using their weight to keep rivals out. Abuse of dominance cases, market inquiries and advocacy can open routes to market. Merger control matters too, because it is easier to prevent harmful consolidation than unwind it later.

Then regulation. Some rules protect the public interest. Others, through licensing delays, complex permits or poor implementation, become a moat for the incumbents. That is why the Commission's Regulatory Review Project, published in April 2026, is inviting businesses to identify rules that are overly restrictive or badly implemented, and to propose fixes.

The aim is pro-competition regulation that protects people without quietly shutting the door on new entrants. This would help reduce the unnecessary red tape.

Technology can also shift power fast by changing the gatekeeper. Streaming, fintech, eCommerce and renewables have all widened options. But disruption is not automatically inclusive, and new markets can recreate old concentration. The policy task is to back innovation while keeping markets contestable.

The priority now is scale. South Africa needs more medium-sized and

larger challenger firms that can compete, invest and hire.

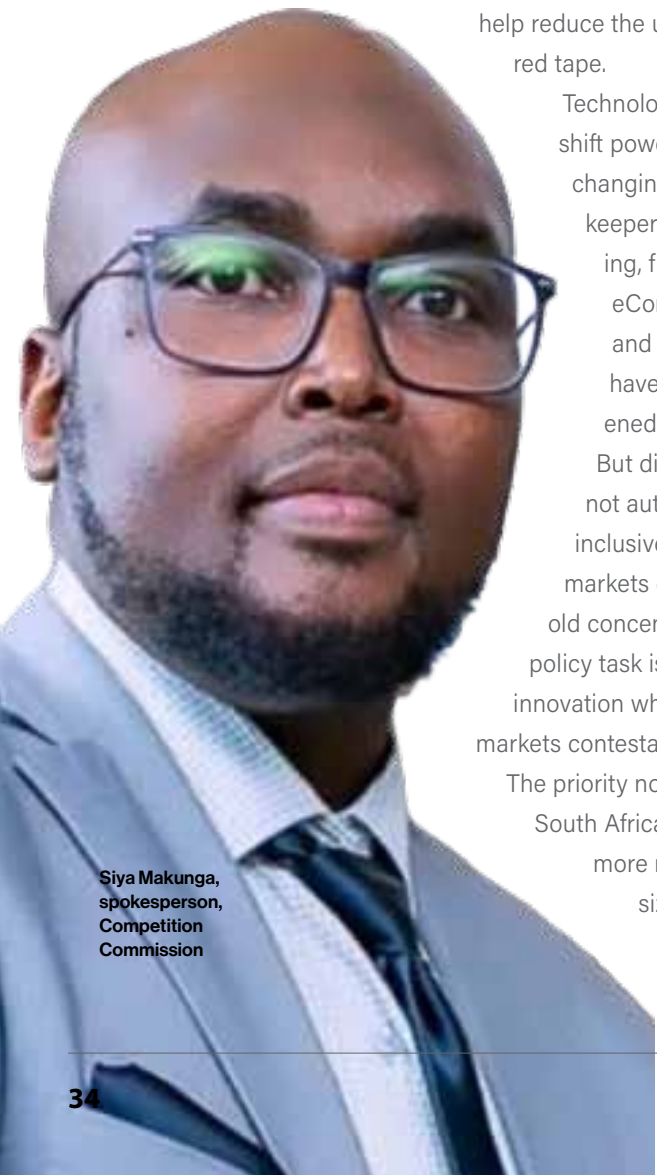
That means removing the bottlenecks that stop promising firms from growing, such as access to finance, logistics, data, key inputs and procurement opportunities. It also means targeting conduct that keeps markets closed, not only conduct that nudges prices up.

Avoiding monopoly in reform

One more caution: restructuring state-owned enterprises should not replace a public monopoly with a private one. Where reform is on the table, opening mar-

kets and separating monopoly functions first can create real space for entry and investment. Structure determines whether competition is even possible.

The second Concentration Report is not a set of tables to admire. It is a challenge to act. Deconcentration is pro-investment, pro-innovation and pro-jobs. The practical test is simple: can a capable firm enter, expand and win customers without being blocked by gatekeepers or paper barriers? If the answer becomes yes, South Africa's next wave of firms can do what the economy needs most: compete, innovate and hire. ❖



Siya Makunga, spokesperson, Competition Commission

Managing Migration Together



5 WORK WITH OTHER AFRICAN COUNTRIES

- Partner with other African countries to promote growth, development and employment
- Tackle political instability, conflict and economic hardship
- Work through SADC, the African Union and our bilateral relationships to better manage migration on the continent



THE PRESIDENCY
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Advancing youth development through opportunity



Thabiso Matsemela

As South Africa commemorates Youth Month, attention turns to the role of the public sector in shaping the future of young professionals, not only as an employer, but as a vital platform for continuous learning, innovation and personal development. The story of Thabiso Matsemela offers a compelling example of how opportunity within government can translate into both professional achievement and meaningful contribution.

Free State Provincial Government

An Engineering Technologist at the Free State Department of Public Works and Infrastructure, Matsemela recently brought pride to his department when he was named Best Master's Student in the Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and

Information Technology at the Central University of Technology. His achievement reflects more than academic excellence; it speaks to the enabling environment that allows young public servants to pursue further studies while actively contributing to service delivery.

Speaking to *Public Sector Manager* magazine during his graduation ceremony, Matsemela described the recognition as a significant milestone in his journey, particularly as it affirmed his commitment to growth beyond the workplace. "I am a firm believer of personal development, and I am currently focusing all my energies towards the completion of my PhD studies," he said.

Turning workplace challenges into research solutions

His academic work was closely aligned with real challenges

faced within the public sector. His research focused on enhancing security against mobile asset theft within government institutions, addressing the increasing need to safeguard portable devices such as laptops in environments where employees are often mobile and operate across multiple locations.

This alignment between research and workplace realities highlights how the Public Service can provide a rich context for innovation, allowing employees to develop solutions that directly benefit government operations.

Matsemela's professional journey further reflects how the public sector can serve as a space for skills development and technical advancement. He has worked across a range of engineering and technology projects, gaining experience in the development and management of security systems, energy

management solutions, smart electrical systems and access control technologies.

His work also includes involvement in CCTV systems and custom engineering solutions, demonstrating exposure to diverse and complex areas of practice. Through these opportunities, he has been able to build a strong and adaptable skillset while contributing to improved efficiency and safety in the environments he serves.

Throughout his career, he has played a role in delivering advanced alarm and intrusion detection systems, smart monitoring solutions and integrated access control technologies using tools such as radio frequency identification, mobile devices and biometric systems.

His experience also extends to CCTV surveillance and remote monitoring solutions, further reinforcing the depth of expertise he has cultivated within the public sector environment.

A space for innovation

His contributions have not gone unnoticed. In 2022, Matsemela was recognised by the Centre for Public Service Innovation for developing an integrated alarm system combined with energy management capabilities. The project demonstrated how security and energy optimisation could be effectively integrated into a single intelligent system, showcasing the kind of forward-thinking innovation that the public service is increasingly positioned to support.

Building on this foundation, Matsemela has continued to pursue solutions that respond to modern security challenges. He recently developed a scale model prototype of an Intelligent Asset Protection System aimed at safeguarding government information technology resources.

He explained that the system is designed to autonomously monitor and protect mobile assets such as laptops when the authorised user is not present,

and he has proposed that it be piloted within office environments.

The system incorporates a range of features designed to strengthen security and accountability, including the ability to detect when an authorised user leaves the vicinity of an asset, identify attempted intrusions and automatically alert security personnel in real time. It is also capable of capturing images of potential intruders and logging evidence, while integrating with access control systems to restrict movement and enable intervention.

In addition, it allows for temporary biometric registration for authorised individuals such as auditors or visitors. Together, these capabilities offer a comprehensive response to the growing risks associated with mobile asset theft.

According to Matsemela, such innovations are particularly relevant in environments where the protection of information and equipment is critical, including government offices, audit

settings, corporate workplaces and high-security facilities. He noted that the system contributes to reducing theft incidents, strengthening real-time response, improving evidence collection and enhancing overall accountability.

Investing in young people

As Youth Month places the spotlight on empowerment and opportunity, Matsemela's journey illustrates the value of a public sector that invests in its people.

His experience demonstrates how access to education, exposure to real-world challenges and recognition of innovation can enable young professionals to grow while making a tangible impact.

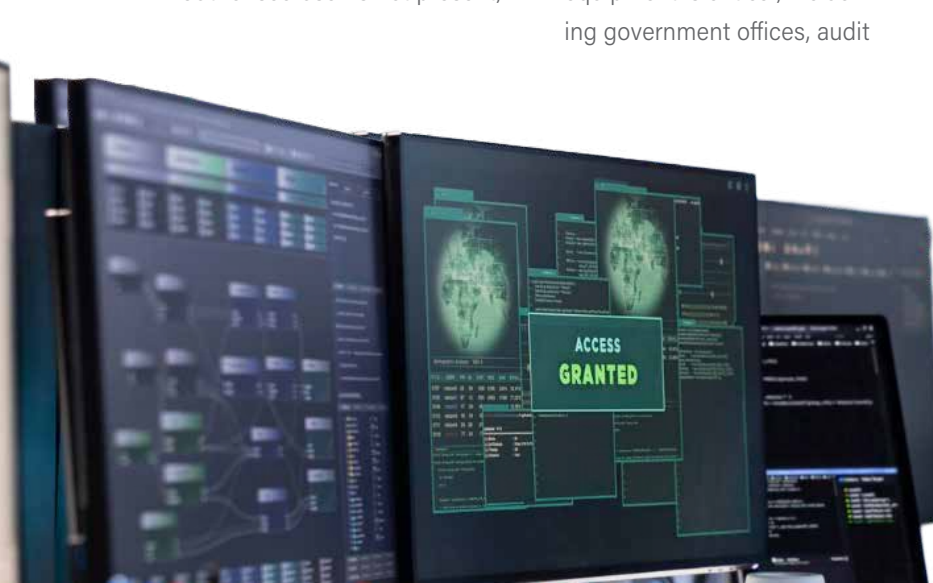
His ongoing pursuit of a PhD further reinforces the message that learning does not end at employment, but can be continuously supported through the opportunities available within the workplace.

In this way, the public sector becomes not only a place of work, but a space where ambition is nurtured and potential is realised. ❖

***Mlungisi Maqubela is the Spokesperson for the Free State Department of Public Works and Infrastructure.**

Photo: Magnific

The protection of information and equipment is critical in the public sector.



Telling African stories through ready-to-wear fashion

In this edition, *Public Sector Manager* magazine features another installment of ready-to-wear designs that are grounded in storytelling and craftsmanship by a Congolese-born fashion designer and creative director, Dorcas Mutombo, who is based in Cape Town.

Her label, Emelia D, reflects Mutombo's multidisciplinary creative background, where fashion becomes both narrative and art form.

Mutombo's designs reflect her deep pride in the continent, drawing on its cultural richness, strength, and beauty, while her creative approach is continually inspired by African heritage across fashion, art, and storytelling.



1



2



About the designer

Mutombo refined her craft at the Elizabeth Galloway Academy of Fashion in Stellenbosch, where she completed an Advanced Diploma in Fashion Design, building a strong foundation in garment construction, textiles and conceptual design.

She launched her label, Emelia D, in 2019, during her second year of study, later relaunching the brand in 2022, with a renewed creative vision. Beyond fashion design, Mutombo is also a qualified photographer and contributes behind the scenes as an assistant stylist.

Her rising influence in the industry was cemented when she was named the winner of the South African Fashion Week Scouting Menswear Competition on 25 April 2026.

1. Knitted cotton coat: R20 000 2. Knitted cotton jersey: R11 000
3. Felted jacket: R4 300 4. Floral set: R9 200



Scan the QR code for more information. You can also WhatsApp her on 061 114 1183 or follow her on Instagram and TikTok @emelia_dorcas Emelia D

** Prices correct at the time of publishing.*

Chef de Partie Prudence Ntombela's award-winning recipe

In this edition, *Public Sector Manager* features an award-winning dish by **Chef de Partie Prudence Ntombela** – the Masala Slinger with Creamy Lancewood Arancini, Romesco Sauce and Pico de Gallo. Bold yet beautifully balanced, the plate brings together warming spice, rich creaminess and vibrant freshness, creating a layered dining experience that delights with every bite.



This standout creation, paired with the elegant David Nieuwoudt Ghost Corner Pinot Noir 2023, earned silver at the 2025 Inter-Hotel Challenge Gala Awards, often referred to as the "Oscars of the

hospitality industry".

Masala Slinger with Creamy Lancewood Arancini, Romesco Sauce and Pico de Gallo

Curry ingredients:

○ 1.2 kg lamb (shoulder or

leg), cut into medium cubes

- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 2 large onions finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons of finely

chopped garlic

- 2 tablespoons of ginger finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons of masala curry spice
- Handful of fresh chopped curry leaves

- ⦿ Handful of freshly chopped mint
- ⦿ Handful of freshly chopped coriander
- ⦿ ½ teaspoon egg yellow powder
- ⦿ 1 to 2 fresh green chillies, slit open (optional)
- ⦿ 2 medium potatoes, peeled and quartered (optional)
- ⦿ Salt to taste
- ⦿ 2 cups hot water
- ⦿ Fresh coriander chopped (for garnish)

Method

Build the base:

- ⦿ Place the lamb cubes into a bowl and rinse using cold water for five minutes and set aside.
- ⦿ In a large pot add oil, onions and cook on medium heat until deep golden brown (this is key for flavour). Stir in garlic and ginger. Cook for one minute until fragrant.
- ⦿ Add curry leaves, mint, coriander, masala powder and chillies.
- ⦿ Fry spices for 30 to 60 seconds (do not burn).
- ⦿ Add the lamb to the pot then add salt and hot water.
- ⦿ Cover and simmer on low heat

for 1½ to 2 hours, stirring occasionally.

- ⦿ Coat the potatoes in egg yellow powder and add in the last 30 minutes of cooking.
- ⦿ Season with salt to taste, garnish with fresh coriander, and let rest 10 minutes before serving.

Steamed rice ingredients

- ⦿ 2 cups of Basmati or long-grain rice
- ⦿ 4 cups of water
- ⦿ 1 tablespoon of salt
- ⦿ 1 tablespoon of oil or butter (optional)

Method:

- ⦿ Rinse rice until water runs clear.
- ⦿ Bring water, salt and oil to boil.
- ⦿ Add rice and stir once.
- ⦿ Reduce heat, cover and simmer for 12 to 15 minutes.
- ⦿ Rest five minutes, then fluff with a fork.

Serving suggestions

- ⦿ Serve with sambals (finely diced tomato, onion, carrot and chili).
- ⦿ Add roti, naan or steamed bread.



About the Chef

Chef de Partie Prudence Ntombela is a Durban-based culinary professional who has built a strong reputation through dedication, passion and consistent growth in the hospitality industry. She began her career at Sibaya Casino and Entertainment Kingdom in 2010, steadily developing her skills over the years before rising to her current position in 2022.

Her commitment to excellence has earned her national recognition, including a silver award at the 2025 Inter-Hotel Challenge Gala Awards, where she placed second in the highly competitive Food and Wine Pairing category. Known for her resilience, creativity and attention to detail, Ntombela continues to distinguish herself by bringing both heart and precision to every dish she creates.

For more information, visit:

www.suninternational.com/sibaya,
call: 031 580 5000 or
sibayaenquiries@suninternational.com

You can also follow her on
Instagram: [@sun_sibaya](https://www.instagram.com/sun_sibaya) and
Facebook: [@sibayacasino](https://www.facebook.com/sibayacasino)

Tip: A squeeze of lemon just before serving lifts the curry beautifully.

A Big Five escape on Pretoria's doorstep



Dinokeng Game Reserve is protecting rhinos from poaching.

In early May, I discovered a slice of wilderness I had long overlooked. Just under an hour's drive from my home, Dinokeng Game Reserve – Gauteng's first and only free-roaming Big Five reserve – proved that you do not need to venture far to experience the magic of the bush.

Tucked away in the north-eastern reaches of Tshwane,

Dinokeng offers an unexpectedly immersive safari experience, one that feels worlds away from the city despite its proximity. For someone who had never spent a night at a game reserve before, the ease of access alone was a revelation. I had always assumed that encountering the Big Five would require an expensive trip.

My visit formed part of the Meeting Dinokeng Showcase, a two-day event hosted by the Gauteng Department of Environment, in partnership with the City of Tshwane and other stakeholders.

The showcase brought together an impressive array of delegates from over 40 countries, including representatives

from Peru, China, Lithuania, Ghana, Japan, Malaysia, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Liberia

The game drive

To make the most of the experience, delegates were divided into two groups. One set off to explore nearby attractions such as the scenic Roodeplaats Dam

and the historic Cullinan Diamond Mine. I, however, found myself in the fortunate half – the group eager to immerse in the raw beauty of the reserve and encounter, firsthand, what nature had to offer.

Our game drive was led by Sally Pale of Kekana Gardens in Hammanskraal – one of only three women among the reserve's 20 tour guides. Her calm confidence and deep knowledge of the bush added a distinctive touch to the experience.

Joining me were Malaysia's High Commissioner Dato' Yubazlan Haji Yusof and his Third Secretary Nazrul Firzadh Yunus. What began as a polite introduction quickly gave way to warm conversation, and by the time we ventured deeper into the reserve, we had formed an easy camaraderie that made the journey all the more memorable.

Our vehicle wound its way through the bushveld with each turn revealing a new spectacle. We experienced all sorts of emotions as we saw a variety of wild animals at close range.

We spotted a confusion of blue wildebeest moving across the plains, a white rhinoceros with its calf grazing quietly and a pack of black-backed jackals

weaving through the grass.

A herd of greater kudu stood elegantly among the trees, while a tower of giraffes browsed lazily nearby. Zebras gathered in a striking dazzle, and impalas moved gracefully through the landscape, completing the vibrant scene.

All of this unfolded over the course of a three-hour drive. Pale was patient with our bursts of enthusiasm, pausing often to allow us to take it all in, while sharing fascinating insights into the animals' behaviour, diets and survival instincts.

Her storytelling brought the landscape to life in a way that felt both educational and deeply personal.

By the time we stopped for a late lunch, I felt a quiet sense of renewal, as though the bush had gently lifted the weight of everyday concerns.

About Dinokeng

Dinokeng, also dubbed one of Gauteng's flagship eco-tourism projects, was established in 2011, through a public-private partnership between the Gauteng Provincial Government and private landowners.

This collaborative model is at the heart of its success: while the reserve is responsible for wildlife conservation and environmental management, private landowners provide a diverse range of

accommodation options, giving visitors the freedom to tailor their stay.

Beyond its appeal as a leisure destination, Dinokeng has made a meaningful socio-economic impact, creating approximately 800 direct jobs and thousands more indirectly. It forms part of the broader Dinokeng-Roodeplaat-Cullinan tourism hub, an initiative designed to diversify Gauteng's tourism offering beyond its traditional focus on business travel and retail experiences.

Attractions

The Roodeplaat Dam offers a different kind of attraction.

Situated just north of Pretoria,



Rhinos in the reserve are fitted with GPS tracking devices to ensure their safety.



Sally Pale a nature guide at the Dinokeng Game Reserve.



Blue wildebeest.

it has earned international recognition as a high-performance training site for canoeing and water sports. Perched at an altitude of 1 200 metres, it continues to draw elite athletes from around the world.

Further east lies the historic Cullinan Diamond Mine, a cornerstone of South Africa's mineral heritage. It is here that the legendary 3 106-carat Cullinan Diamond, still the largest gem-quality diamond ever

discovered, was unearthed.

Back in Dinokeng, however, the focus returns to the untamed beauty of the bush. Spanning roughly 22 000 hectares, the reserve is home to more than 80 lodges and tented camps, including intimate retreats such as Leadwood Safari Camp.

Whether opting for a self-drive adventure or a guided game drive, visitors are immersed in a malaria-free wilder-

ness that feels both accessible and authentic.

More than just a destination, Dinokeng represents a vision for the future of conservation; one that balances tourism, community upliftment and environmental stewardship.

It is a place where people and wildlife coexist, and where, even if only for a weekend, the demands of modern life give way to the restorative rhythm of nature.

When to visit

The reserve is ideal for a spontaneous weekend, although it operates every day of the week, where the highlight is doing very little, apart from spotting wildlife, enjoying a quiet braai and soaking up that bushveld silence.

My Malaysian companions and I were hosted at the charming Tshikwalo Lodge, a tranquil retreat nestled within the reserve. Just a short 15-minute drive away, Mongena Private Game Lodge set the scene for an elegant evening dinner, offering yet another perspective on Dinokeng's diverse hospitality.

The following morning, we gathered for breakfast in the open-air boma at Kwalata Lodge, surrounded by the gentle sounds of nature.

From there, we ventured into the bush to witness a conservation effort few ever get to see firsthand: a team of professional rangers and veterinarians carefully tracking and safely immobilising a rhino to fit a GPS tracking device to its horn.

It was a life-changing moment. Watching the precision, care and dedication of the team at work offered a powerful reminder of what it takes to protect endangered species. ❖

Scan the QR code for more information.

